

BOOK REVIEWS

Management of the Sick Infant. By Langley Porter and William E. Carter. St. Louis: C. V. Mosby Company. 1922.

The proper construction of a textbook or of any book of reference should be based directly on the needs of the people who are expected to use it. The neglect of this point of view is responsible for the small value of many—perhaps most—of the numerous texts which are turned out every year. The majority of them are written by teachers and addressed to their students and bear the mark of the class-room rather than of actual life and reality. Medical books especially suffer from this fault. Too few of them are put out by the clinician for the clinician. Too few of them readily yield the answer to the questions for which the practitioner turns to their pages. He may wish to know to what diagnosis a particular set of unusual symptoms point, or what is a better treatment than his own for a given disease, or the details of a therapeutic technique with which he is familiar with only in principle. In the first case, consulting the average book he will find that he must read over the descriptions of several diseases in the same general group; in the second case, he is apt to find the customary "standard" methods with which he is already familiar, and in the third case, he will rarely find any help at all. It is a frequent comment that textbooks serve to perpetuate the mistakes of their predecessors. Certainly most of them are not based entirely or even in large part on the direct experience of their authors. Because it was an exception to this rule, Osler's "Practice of Medicine" took the medical world by storm with its freshness and its originality of observation, while maintaining a critical appreciation of the old.

It is to the credit of the Pacific Coast that its most recent—and one of its few—medical texts should bear the same stamp of reality and should be so intelligently planned to meet actual needs. It can be at once recommended to any practitioner of medicine who has to deal with the diseases of young children. It avoids the mistakes which have been discussed and offers the advantages which have been mentioned. The book is arranged in three sections. The first is devoted to a consideration of the significance of symptoms and to the indications for treatment which they present. The second section is given up to a descriptive outline of the diseases peculiar to early childhood. Both these exhaustive without pedantry plainly reflect the mature conclusions of the senior author's long and great clinical experience in pediatrics. They merit a more extensive description than our space allows. The third section, devoted to a listed description with illustrations of equipment and exact procedure for each of the technical diagnostic and therapeutic methods used in pediatrics, is unique in textbooks in English, and, indeed, is not equalled for completeness in any language. There is no reason why the general practitioner, acquainted with the principles of medical technique, should not be able from a careful perusal of this book to carry out the methods which hitherto have been left to a few specialists. Further, his nurse by referring to the book herself will be able to have all the necessary equipment prepared for him in advance—a considerable saving of time.

The reviewer has for a number of years considered that there were only two American texts which were indispensable to the practicing pediatrician—that of Holt and Howland, and that of Morse and Talbot. To these he is now inclined to add that of Porter and Carter because of its prac-

tical utility and its freshness of matter and because it offers material which is not to be found elsewhere in readily available form. H. K. F.

Principles of Immunology. By Howard T. Karsner, M. D., and Enrique E. Ecker, Ph. D. 309 pages. Illustrated. Philadelphia and London: J. B. Lippincott Company. 1921.

This is a valuable guide for students or practitioners of medicine who desire a concise statement of the facts and the hypotheses concerning resistance to infection. The general arrangement of the text is excellent and the difficult subject is presented in a remarkably clear manner. Facts established by experimental studies are detailed and supplemented by brief discussions of the practical and theoretical bearing of the phenomena upon disease and resistance in man. In twelve chapters the following subjects are reviewed: Virulence of organisms, general conditions of infection and resistance, general phenomena of immunity, toxins and antitoxins, agglutinins and precipitins, cytoly-sins, cellular resistance, complement fixation, application of complement fixation to the diagnosis of disease, hypersusceptibility, hypersusceptibility in man and defensive ferments. The practical application of immunology to the prevention and cure of disease has been summarized in three appendices, dealing with the therapeutic employment of blood serums, prophylactic vaccination and vaccine therapy. Throughout the text valuable information is given relative to the technical execution of experiments. Some of the customary laboratory procedures are explained and enhanced by drawings or colored plates. This book is a valuable addition to any medical library. K. F. M.

Clinical Diagnosis. A textbook of clinical microscopy and clinical chemistry for medical students, laboratory workers and practitioners of medicine. By Charles Phillips Emerson, A. B., M. D. 5th ed. 726 pages. Illustrated. Philadelphia and London: J. B. Lippincott Company. 1921.

It is ten years since the last edition of this book appeared. In its preface, the author condemns the present separation of laboratory and ward, and "No matter how successful a man may be, he has no right to entrust his laboratory work entirely to others. The one who takes the history of the patient and makes the physical examination is the only one who can interpret correctly a laboratory finding." Herein lies the value of this book, one of the best on clinical diagnosis. L. E.

The Surgical Treatment of Non-Malignant Affections of the Stomach. By Charles Greene Cumston, M. D., and Georges Patry, M. D. 349 pages. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company. 1921.

There is nothing new in this book, but it is a compilation founded on a wide study of the literature and personal visits of the authors to a great many foreign clinics. L. E.

Tuberculosis in Infancy and Childhood. By J. Claxton Gittings and Frank Crozer Knowles and Astley P. C. Ashhurst. 273 pages. Illustrated. Philadelphia and London: J. B. Lippincott Company. 1922.

This book is a most concise, though at the same time complete, presentation of tuberculosis in infants and children. In slightly over 250 pages, the authors present a short historical review, general aspects of the disease and detailed description of the disease in the several organs; also instructions for the application of various tests.

To tuberculosis of the skin (F. C. Knowles) is given a very interesting and extensive chapter, whereas bones and joints have been treated rather too briefly. The notes on treatment of tuberculosis

are in general sane and practical. However, advice somewhat exceeds the margin of safety in openly advocating "euthanasia by toys" in certain cases. M. H. L.

The Place of Version in Obstetrics—By Irving W. Potter, M. D., F. A. C. S. 138 pages, with 42 illustrations. St. Louis: C. V. Mosby Company, 1922. Price, \$5.

Unfortunately, only about fifty pages of the one hundred and forty of this monograph contain personal experiences of the author. Some seventy pages are devoted to the history of version. This portion of the volume is unquestionably the more interesting one, since it quotes many of the classical authorities verbally. As far as the chapters on technique are concerned, there is nothing new that has not been done in most every well conducted maternity. There is little argument offered and less proof given that the author's contention of delivering all women by version and extraction can be accepted for general teaching. Like in all other fields where technical skill can be developed to the finest point by a large amount of experience, so in obstetrics Potter has shown that this can be done without undue risk to the patient and the child. It is interesting that his percentage of Caesarean Sections runs close to 10 per cent of all cases delivered.

In a monograph like this one would expect the author to give his complete experience with this work rather than just a very meager discussion of the work of two years.

When reading the last chapters one can not help but feel that the author was hurrying to finish his volume for the press. I refrain from discussing the style of presenting the subject.

There are many salient points made in this book that are worth while to scrutinize. Aside from that and the historical introduction, this monograph is decidedly unsafe in the hands of students and beginners. L. A. E.

Clinical Electrocardiography—By Frederick A. Willius, B. S., M. D., M. S., in medicine. One hundred and eighty-eight pages, with 185 illustrations. Philadelphia and London: W. B. Saunders Company, 1922.

The author shows that he appreciates the difficulties of the study. He has carefully digested the literature on the subject and gives it to the students of electrocardiography in an easy, digestible form. In his numerous pictures of electrocardiograms in cases of angina pectoris, it would have been better had he called attention to the peculiar characteristics, if any were present, in each of the electrocardiograms which he shows. H. S.

An Essay on the Physiology of Mind. An interpretation based on biological, morphological, physical and chemical considerations. By Francis X. Dercum. Philadelphia and London: W. B. Saunders Company, 1922.

This 150-page essay of Dercum's is a protest against the attitude of those metaphysicians and psychologists by whom "the phenomena of mind have been approached as though they were peculiar in their character and being; as though a difference, essential and intrinsic, separated these phenomena by a wide and hopeless gap from all other phenomena of nature." In the first part of the book, one begins with the unicellular organism without nervous system, proceeds by way of the sponges through the fishes and the higher vertebrates to the fully developed human. No especial difficulty is encountered until one meets the word "consciousness" on page 82. The rest of the book is devoted to bridging the gap. The final chapter endeavors to explain the psychoses and the psycho-neuroses in terms of physiology. It is good reading for those who have read much or who will read much. Others may as well let it alone. E. W. T.

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